

REMARKS

Examiner's comments in the Office Action marked "non-final" and dated June 26, 2008 have been read and carefully considered by Applicants. In view of such comments, Applicants have herein amended claim 20. Since claims 2 and 3 have been previously canceled and since no other claims have been altogether canceled or newly added herein by Applicants, claims 1 and 4-20 thus remain in Applicants' present Application for Examiner's consideration.

At the present time, it is Applicants' good faith belief that claims 1 and 4-20, as presented herein, are both novel and non-obvious in view of all known prior art and that the claims properly comply with all applicable statutory requirements. Therefore, Applicants respectfully aver that the claims now place the present Application in a condition for allowance and notice thereof is respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claim 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a):

In the Office Action, Examiner rejected independent claim 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated, and therefore rendered unpatentable, by United States Patent Number 6,403,942, which was issued to Joseph S. Stam on June 11, 2002 (hereinafter "Stam"). In response, Applicants have amended claim 20 as set forth hereinabove. In view of claim 20 as amended, Applicants now respectfully traverse the 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) rejection set forth in the Office Action and request that the rejection be withdrawn.

In particular, for Stam to anticipate the subject matter set forth in Applicants' independent claim 20 and thereby render the claim unpatentable, Stam must disclose

[a] method of operating a headlight system on a vehicle for adaptively illuminating a roadway to enhance visibility, said method comprising the steps of:

controlling said headlight system to selectively produce a beam illumination pattern that illuminates said roadway;

detecting at least one communication signal generated from at least one object that is external to said vehicle;

controlling said headlight system, in response to and in accordance with each said communication signal, to selectively produce an alternative beam illumination pattern that illuminates said roadway; and

controlling said headlight system, in response to and in accordance with each said communication signal, to selectively alter its beam illumination pattern by adjusting at least one beam illumination parameter selected from the group consisting of beam angle, beam focus, beam amplitude, beam position, and beam shape[,]

as now required by Applicants' claim 20 amended herein. Stam, however, does not disclose such a "method of operating a headlight system on a vehicle" in which the headlight system is controlled to "selectively produce a beam illumination pattern that illuminates [a] roadway" and then selectively produce an "alternative beam illumination pattern" and/or "selectively alter its beam illumination pattern by adjusting at least one beam illumination parameter" (beam angle, focus, amplitude, position, and/or shape) according to a "[detected] communication signal" that is generated from an "[external] object," as now set forth in claim 20 and also supported in the Application as originally filed by Applicants. (United States Patent Application Publication Number 2004/0114381 by Applicants, see specification paragraphs 0010, 0026, 0027, 0030, 0032-0034, 0041, and 0047-0057 and also Figures 2-6.) Instead, Stam merely discloses a "headlamp control system" for a vehicle in which the "high/low beam state of the headlamps," the "brightness" of the headlamps, and the "aim" or "steering" of the headlamps are simply controlled in response to the detected "reflections of waves" off of "objects in front of the vehicle." (United States Patent Number 6,403,942 by Stam, see column 3, lines 14-38 and 52-63; column 4, lines 10-21 and 52-67; and column 5, lines 1-14.) That is, Stam does not disclose a method of operating a vehicle headlight system in which both beam illumination patterns and beam illumination parameters are accordingly selected, replaced, and/or adjusted in response to communication signals that are generated by external objects, as now claimed by Applicants.

In sum, therefore, since Stam does not disclose the method as presently set forth in Applicants' independent claim 20, Applicants respectfully aver that claim 20 is not anticipated by Stam and that claim 20 is thus patentable. In view of such, Applicants respectfully request that Examiner's rejection of claim 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) be withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter:

Also, in the Office Action, Examiner indicated that claims 1 and 4-19 contain patentable subject matter and are thus allowable in their present form. In response, Applicants would like to thank Examiner for so allowing these claims.

CONCLUSION

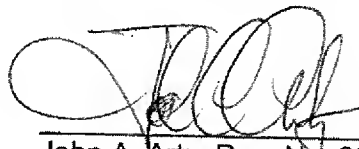
In view of the claims as heretofore amended and also the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1 and 4-20 are all both novel and non-obvious with respect to the disclosure and teachings of Stam and that the claims now properly comply with all statutory requirements for patentability. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that Examiner's claim rejection(s) in the Office Action be withdrawn and that a Notice of Allowance be issued for all claims 1 and 4-20.

Also, together with this Amendment, a "Petition for an Extension of Time" (1 month) along with appropriate fee is being submitted. Receipt and entry thereof by Examiner is respectfully requested by Applicants.

Lastly, should Examiner have any questions with respect to any matter now of record, Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: 10/13/08